

Opinion – Associate Professor

1. Information about the procedure

Habilitation procedure for the academic position of *Associate Professor* at the American University in Bulgaria, conducted in accordance with Bulgarian legislation. The procedure falls within Higher Education Area **3. Social and Economic Sciences and Law**, professional field **3.3. Political Sciences** and has been announced in the Bulgarian **State Gazette, Issue 77 dated 19 September 2025**.

The evaluation below is based on the *Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act*, the Rules for its implementation, the internal AUBG rules, regulations, and policies, including the *Habilitation Procedure*, and the additional requirements for the procedure advertised on the AUBG website.

Candidate: **Senior Assistant Professor Jean Crombois, Ph.D.**, American University in Bulgaria

Reviewer: Prof Todor Panaitov Kolarov, D. Sc., New Bulgarian University

2. Confirmation of the Candidate's Eligibility for Admission to the Habilitation Procedure

Dr. Jean Crombois has been admitted to the competition on the basis of established compliance with the requirements set out in Enclosures 1, 2 and 3 to this document. According to the evidence presented, the candidate's scientific achievements correspond to the Minimum National Requirements (MNR) for the academic position of Associate Professor in Professional Field 3.3 Political Science (Enclosure 3).

3. Qualitative Evaluation of the Candidate's Achievements

The scientific interests of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Crombois are in the field of integration within the European Union (EU), and more specifically on historical and theoretical aspects; the EU's Eastern Partnership and the enlargement process; the foreign policy of the EU and its member states, with an emphasis on Bulgaria's foreign policy after 2014.

Dr. Crombois has submitted two books to participate in the competition:

- Crombois, J.-F. (2011). *Camille Gutt and Postwar International Finance*. London and New York: Taylor and Francis. In light of the requirements of the *Development of Academic Staff in the Republic*

of Bulgaria Act, it should be noted that the scientific jury is aware that the subject of this research and of the doctoral dissertation of the candidate, entitled Crombois, J.-F. (1998). *Camille Gutt et le gouvernement de Londres: aspects politiques, économiques et financiers de la participation belge à la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, demonstrate similarities. This opinion deems that the subject matter of the two studies is different. The latter is the result of a three-year period of research at Oxford University. Dr. Crombois declares that the lead publication submitted for this competition was reviewed by two reviewers under conditions of complete anonymity (double anonymous peer-review) upon its publication.

A check of the above publication with the software product Turnitin demonstrates a 4% similarity with other publications. Moreover, some of these similarities are of the kind "during the Second World War" or "made no secret of his belief", and others are with later publications by other authors, which gives reason to claim that there are no indications of plagiarism in the work. (E.g. Baltrop, P. R. (2021) *The Routledge History of the Second World War*. Routledge.)

The book consists of an introduction, six chapters, and a conclusion. The first chapter, *Camille Gutt. Finance and Politics (1919-40)*, focuses on Gutt's professional development during the interwar period. The second chapter, *Belgium War Financial Diplomacy: Negotiating the Belgian Financial Contribution to the War Effort*. The third chapter, *Financial Diplomacy in London During the Second World War*, focuses on Gutt's involvement in discussions about the post-war monetary and financial system. Chapter four, *Extending the Benelux Agreements: Regional Integration as an Alternative to Anglo-American Plans*, explores Gutt's role in postwar regional cooperation within the Benelux. Chapter five, *The Birth of a Monetary System: Camille Gutt and Bretton-Woods (1943-4)*, focuses on Gutt's contributions to the creation of the Bretton-Woods system, although they have their own significant limitations. Chapter six, *Camille Gutt, First Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (1946-51)*, focuses on Gutt's role in dealing with the difficulties associated with Europe's post-war reconstruction.

A contribution of the work is the in-depth development of the topic of Camille Gutt's otherwise well-known role in establishing the Bretton Woods system after the end of World War II, as well as the regional political and economic integration between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg in the same period. The analysis of the discussion in Belgium about the choice of policy regarding the economic path of development between the two wars – financial discipline based on the gold standard or devaluation of the Belgian currency, which would boost domestic consumption, is of a constructive nature. In view of the object of the study, the focus is on the critical analysis of the role of the first opinion and the consequences of the influence of this opinion, with its deficits, on the post-war international financial system.

- Crombois, J. F. (1994). *L'univers de la sociologie en Belgique de 1900 à 1940*. Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles. 150 pp. ISBN 10: 2800410965 ISBN 13: 9782800410968. This book is undoubtedly a monograph that does not repeat previous works by the author, and explicitly includes a foreword by Jean-Jacques Herwig.

To participate in the competition, Dr. Crombois submitted 16 articles, which mainly examine various aspects of Bulgarian and European foreign policy, which testify to his deep scientific interests in these areas.

In addition to the information presented by the candidate, a quick search in Google Scholar shows 277 citations, a Hirsch index of 9, and an i10 index of 9. It is notorious that the data in this database is not exhaustive, and there are false positives, as self-citations are not automatically eliminated. However, Dr. Crombois's performance is indicative of the quality of his scientific output. The above opinion is not affected by the fact that nearly half of the publications listed in this database are co-authored. It is relevant to the procedure that, as of the date of preparation of this opinion, the most cited work of the candidate, according to the aforementioned reference, is the article *The Eastern Partnership: Geopolitics and Policy Inertia*.

The recognition of the scientific community in the relevant professional field is also evidenced by the invitations to Dr. Crombois from 6 different scientific journals, for which he has prepared 11 peer reviews of articles submitted for potential publication in these journals. Among them are publications included in Scopus. For example, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, a journal in the first quartile for 2023 and 2024 in the relevant category "Political Science and International Relations", *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies*, in the second quartile for the same period in the same category, *Romanian Journal of Political Science*, in the fourth quartile for the same period in the same category, *Southeastern Europe*, in the third quartile for 2023, as well as *Science in Context*, *Contemporary European History*.

4. Conclusion and recommendation

In view of the above, I believe that the candidate Dr. Jean Crombois meets the mandatory minimum science metric criteria for occupying the academic position of "associate professor" in the professional field 3.3 Political Sciences, including those under the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act. **I support his candidacy for the above-mentioned academic position and propose to the scientific jury to propose to the American University in Bulgaria to select the candidate for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.3 Political Science.**

Signature:.....

Date:.....

*Requirements for the Academic Position of Associate Professor at the
American University in Bulgaria Other than the National Minimum
Requirements*

(1)	The Candidate has a Ph.D.;
(2)	The Candidate has teaching experience from recognized and accredited higher education liberal arts institution(s);
(3)	The Candidate has teaching experience in a student-centered environment;
(4)	The Candidate has undergone at least one successful evaluation in teaching, research, and service at a recognized and accredited higher education liberal arts institution, including positive student evaluations of teaching;
(5)	The candidate has at least two years of experience in teaching in English at a higher education institution with English language instruction;
(6)	The candidate has at least five years of experience as Assistant Professor or Senior Assistant Professor ¹ at a recognized and accredited academic institution in Bulgaria or abroad, OR,
(7)	If internal to AUBG, the Candidate has received a positive final decision for promotion to Associate Professor after evaluation according to the internal AUBG rules based on the US traditions as defined in the Faculty Handbook;
(8)	The Candidate has published a monograph or publications of equal standing in specialized academic editions;
(9)	The Candidate has original research works and publications and other academic and applied works, which are evaluated in their entirety;
(10)	None of the publications presented for the current procedure repeat publications used for the acquisition of the educational and academic degree of "Doctor", the academic degree of "Doctor of Sciences", or a previous academic rank according to the Bulgarian legislation;
(11)	The Candidate has not been found responsible for plagiarism in their works under a statutory procedure.

¹ As defined by the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act.

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Specific AUBG Requirements for the 2025-

Associate Professor, Professional Field 3.3. Political Sciences

Additional specifications: European Union (EU) Politics and History. EU Foreign Policy and Foreign Policy of the EU Member States.

Research focus on:

- R1. European Integration: History and Theory, with a Focus on Early European Integration During the Cold War.
- R2. New Developments in European Integration.
- R3. European Union Policy Towards the European Union's Eastern Partnership and European Union Enlargement.
- R4. EU Foreign Policy and the Foreign Policy of the EU Member States with a Focus on Bulgaria's Foreign Policy Since 2014.

Teaching experience in:

- T1. European Integration: History and Theory Since 1945.
- T2. European Integration: Policy-Making Processes.
- T3. European Union's Foreign Policy and Diplomacy.
- T4. European Union's Foreign Policy Towards China and Russia and the Foreign Policy of the Member States with a Focus on Central and Eastern European Member States.

*Bulgarian Minimum National Requirements for an ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
Academic Position in Professional Field 3.3. Political Sciences*

Indicator Group	Indicator #	Indicator	Number of Points	
			Eligibility	Required by Group
A	1	Doctoral (Ph.D.) dissertation	50	Group A: 50
C	3	Habilitation work – monograph see DEFINITION^ C3 under the table	100	Group C: 100
D	4	Published monograph that has not been presented as primary habilitation work	100	Group D: 200
D	5	Published book based on defended Ph.D. or Doctor of Science dissertation N/A	75	
D	6	Articles and reports published in academic editions that are indexed in world-renowned academic databases	30/n	
D	7	Articles and reports published in non-indexed peer-reviewed editions or edited collective volumes	10/n	
D	8	Studies published in academic editions that are indexed in world-renowned academic databases	45/n	
D	9	Studies published in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals or edited collective volumes	15/n	
D	10	Published chapter in a monograph with multiple authors	20/n	
E	11	Citations or reviews in academic editions, monographs or collective volumes indexed in world-renowned academic databases	15	Group E: 50
E	12	Citations or reviews in [non-indexed] peer-reviewed monographs or collective volumes	10	
E	13	Citations or reviews in non-indexed peer-reviewed journals	5	